



## Attractions

Orlando Florida, the worlds best family holiday location and is without a doubt the theme park capital of the world. With it's sunny climate, competitive flight packages, not to mention all the adventure theme parks, visitors have got big names Universal Studios, Disney World, Sea World and dozens more guaranteed to keep the children entertained as well as the adults. After the theme parks, shopping is the next most popular activity in Orlando.

Near by Attractions:

Magic Kingdom®  
Disney-MGM Studios  
Disney Blizzard Beach Water Park  
Disney Typhoon Lagoon Water Park  
Epcot®  
Disney Quest Indoor Interactive Theme Park  
Sea World  
Universal Studios  
Universal's Island of Adventure  
Wet'n Wild

Fun Spot Action Park  
Gatorland  
Pirate's Cove Adventure Golf  
Ripley's Believe It or Not!  
Silver Springs  
Sky Coaster  
Sky Venture  
Titanic The Exhibition



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## Dining Out

Dining out is a big deal in America. Whether it is breakfast, lunch or dinner, the experience needs to be satisfying and good value.

Generally, food is plentiful, relatively cheap, available 24 hours a day and nearly always appetising and filling.

Most restaurants are informal, T-shirts and shorts are usually acceptable and they cater readily for families. This also leads to two exceptional deals for budget-conscious tourists, especially those with a large tribe.

There is a wide variety of restaurants, cafés and fast-food chains in keeping with the American tradition of eating as much as possible, as often as possible.

American Restaurants

Ribs Restaurants

Steak Houses

Dinner Shows

Pirate's Dinner Adventure  
Arabian Hights Dinner Show  
Medieval Nights Dinner Show  
Sleuths Mystery Dinner Theatre



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## Shopping (Looking for Some Retail Therapy?)

Shopping is part of the entertainment throughout the Greater Orlando area. There's something in every price range in virtually every store. Shop-'til-you-drop types will be delighted to know that Orlando is packed with malls. Most stores accept traveler's checks and major credit cards and cash.

If you visit the Orlando Premium Outlets Centre make sure you visit the customer service building first and ask for your FREE book of very useful discount vouchers.

Some great stores include:

Orlando Premium Outlets  
Mall at Millennia  
Belz Outlets  
Florida Mall



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## Recreation

Florida boasts more golf courses than just about anywhere in the world with reasonable rates for a round. Golf is really big in Florida, and around the Orlando area alone you will find a really good choice of golf courses. Disney World itself boasts of five championship courses and one nine-hole course.

The cost of playing golf in Orlando, and the hire of clubs and motorised buggies is very reasonable, and if you play in the late afternoon, when the climate is at it's most pleasant, then many courses offer further discounted rates.

Tennis and volleyball courts are everywhere and there are ample opportunities for fishing, boating, air boat rides, sailing, jet skiing and wind surfing.

Depending on the season there is also the chance to watch the American games, such as baseball, jai alai, basketball and American football.

Visit Orlando to see the famous Orlando Magics play in the NBA, tickets are reasonably priced.  
Phone 407-916-WNBA (9622)

The Orlando Rays baseball team can be seen in action at Disney's Wide World of Sports Complex from April to the beginning of September.  
Phone 407-939-GAME (4263)



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## Car Hire

Hiring a car in Orlando means you can be in charge of your holiday, you can go where you want, when you want and works out very reasonably when hired on a weekly basis.

Weekly rental rates can be as low as \$100 for the smallest size of car, an Economy (or Sub-compact), usually a Corsa-sized hatchback; next up is the Compact, a small family saloon like a Vauxhall Astra; the Midsize (or Intermediate) is a more spacious 4-door, 5-seater like a Vectra; and the Full-size would be a large-style executive car like an Omega, and you can go up the scale still, with Premium, Luxury and Convertible, plus the Minivan, a Renault Espace or VW Sharan type.



But beware these low starting rates. There are a number of essential insurances, taxes and surcharges, and these can easily take the final weekly rate to \$280 or more. However, all the big rental companies now offer all-inclusive rates, which can work out significantly cheaper if booked in advance in the UK.

Rates can be as low as £150 a week, and you also benefit from easier processing at the Orlando end, making the whole business quicker. To book, call Alamo (0870 400 4571) or Dollar on 0800 252897. Or Avis (0990 900 500); Budget (0880 181181); Thrifty (0990 168 238); Hertz (0990 906090); National (0345 222525); or Suncars (0990 005566). Most holiday companies offer 'free car hire', but it is only the rental cost that is free and you must still pay the insurance, taxes and other extras.

Having a credit card is essential, and there are two main kinds of insurance, the most important being the Loss or Collision Damage Waiver, LDW or CDW. This costs around \$20 a day and covers you for any damage to your hire car. You can manage without it, but the hire company will insist on a huge deposit in the order of \$1,500 on your credit card (and you are also liable for ANY damage). You will also be offered Supplemental Liability Insurance (SLI) or Extended Protection at around \$13 a day. This covers you

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(Car Hire Continued)

against being sued for astronomical amounts by any court-happy American you may happen to bump into.

Relatively new and again optional is the Underinsured Motorists Protection (in case somebody with only minimal cover runs into you) at around \$6 a day Drivers under 25

have to pay an extra \$15-20 a day while all drivers must be at least 21. Other rental costs include local and Florida state taxes, which add \$7 a day to your final bill, and Airport Handling Tax and Access Fee at \$6-7 a day.

For those on a budget, you can arrange travel insurance before you go through specialists like Extrasure (020 7480 6871), whose Americasure policy offers both LDW and SLI at around £5 a day. You may still need to leave a credit card imprint with the hire firm, but they should accept these policies but it is best to check in advance.

### Tipping

Unlike the UK, American's are well customised to tipping. With the exception of petrol pump attendants and fast-food restaurant servers, just about everyone who offers you any sort of service in hotels, bars, restaurants, buses, taxis, airports and other public amenities will expect a tip. In bars, restaurants and taxis, 15% of the bill is the usual going rate while porters will expect \$1 per bag. Brits are notoriously forgetful of this little habit but, as all service industry workers are automatically taxed on the assumption of receiving 15% in tips, you will be doing a major service to the local economy if you remember those few extra dollars each time.

#### Tipping Guide

Bill Suggested Tip

\$15 .....	\$2.25
\$20 .....	\$3.00
\$25 .....	\$3.75
\$30 .....	\$4.50
\$40 .....	\$6.00
\$50 .....	\$7.50



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## When to Go?

If you want to avoid the worst of the crowds, the best times to choose are October to December (but not the week of the Thanksgiving holiday in November or between Christmas and New Year), early January up until 2 weeks before Easter (avoiding President's Day in February) and April (after Easter) to the end of May.

Orlando gets down to some serious tourist business from Memorial Day (the last Monday in May, the official start of the summer season) to Labor Day (the first Monday in September and the last holiday of summer), peaking on the Fourth of July, a huge national holiday.

The Easter holidays are similarly uncomfortable (although the weather is better), but easily the busiest is Christmas time, starting the week before December 25 and lasting until January 2. Car parks often close by mid morning as they are so full.



The best combination of comfortable weather and smaller crowds is to be had in April (avoiding Easter) and October. However, few of the main attractions are affected by rain, although the roller coasters and water rides will close if lightning threatens, and you will be one jump ahead if you have waterproofs, as the crowds noticeably thin out when it gets wet. In any event, all the parks sell cheap, plastic ponchos.

In the colder months, take a few lightweight but warm layers for early morning queues then, when it warms up later, leave them in the lockers provided in all the parks.

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